

The "C-Change" Initiative:

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



## ***Toolbox Talk***

*Week of January 11<sup>th</sup> 2010*

### ***Hand and Eye Protection Awareness***

January is hand and eye protection awareness month at JJW and we begin our series of tool box talks on this subject to raise awareness and focus attention on hazards and injuries consistent with our work. Our goal is to eliminate these injuries through awareness, hazard recognition and proper PPE selection. This week, we will discuss the ANSI standard, PPE requirements, selections, alternatives and good work practices regarding Safety eyewear.

The American National Standards Institutes, or ANSI, provides third party testing of PPE in the construction industry. Z87.1 refers to ANSI's standard of "Practice for Occupational and Educational Eye and Face Protection". In 2003, ANSI revised their testing and certification procedures to add the Z87.1+ designation. Safety glasses, face shields, goggles, welding hoods and burning goggles all fall under the ANSI Z87.1 standard covering eye and face protection. Z87.1 represents a basic level of protection while Z87.1+ represents a higher level of impact protection. When looking for the Z87.1 marking, remember that each component of safety eye and face protection, shall bear the mark. No marking means it is not approved by ANSI. Manufacturers of PPE cannot apply the ANSI certification to their products without intense scrutiny, testing and approval from ANSI. Check with your Superintendent or Safety Coordinator for guidance.

All JJW jobsites require the use of a hard hat with the brim facing forward, safety glasses with side shields and work gloves. Very select sites do not require the use of a hard hat due to the nature of the environment / client (hospitals, etc.).

Last week we discussed the hierarchy of mitigating hazards through the use of Administrative and Engineering controls and finally PPE. PPE is your last line of defense against the unexpected and JJW firmly believes in their continuous use.

Safety glasses are required on all JJW jobs. Safety glasses are also required to be worn under face and welding shields. A large part of our work deals with welding, grinding and use of materials that when handled or used have a potential to release particles, flying objects or produce chemical burns to sensitive areas like our eyes and face. Safety glasses are not always the best selection and we'll look at some of the daily challenges we face to protect our eye and face.

Regardless of where you work, conditions change. With that in mind we must be aware and able to recognize hazards as they develop. It is vitally important that we first have and then select the proper protection as these conditions change. Here are a couple situations we've encountered and successfully made changes to our PPE that prevented an eye injury:

- General work on scaffolding where wind conditions change. Metal particles and dirt on scaffold deck present a huge hazard to those climbing up and down, particularly when their face reaches the deck level and wind blows those materials into a workers face. A worker is grinding, stops, lifts their shield and the metal particles fall down behind their safety glasses. This is particularly important when welders use the MSA hardhat designed to be worn forwards where the brim is not forward to stop falling debris. Solution? Fecto-goggles. A tight fitting, foam lined eye wear that's comfortable and effective against these types of hazards and conditions. Keep in mind, most permits or clients will not issue a change in PPE requirements. This is a condition we must recognize and make corrections BEFORE an injury occurs.

Face shields used by JJW are manufactured by MSA. Our three part system provides high impact protection as referenced by the z87+ marking on the shield. The additional chin guard/throat protector adds superior protection and allows the end user to meet the secondary eye protection requirement with standard safety glasses. All other single or two piece shields lacking the chin/throat protector requires goggles to be worn under the shield. This face shield system works in conjunction with the V Guard hard hats also manufactured by MSA. Together, they provide exceptional protection from grinding and splash hazards JJW employees encounter on a daily basis.

Burning goggles and tinted face shields provide protection against harmful UV rays given off by welding and burning operations. Dark safety glasses DO NOT provide protection against these hazards and personnel need to be aware of this. Mechanics assisting welders need to be protected as well as passersby from the UV rays. Welding screens and PPE for the mechanics must be in place prior to starting work to provide the needed protection. Again, it is critical that each jobsite have these safeguards on hand and readily available for use.

Welding in areas that require respiratory protection is another challenge that can be met with the correct selection of PPE. Half face respirators with low profile "pancake" filters generally fit beneath standard JJW issued welding shields. Welders in full face or supplied air respirators must utilize the clip-on face shields for protection against UV rays. Many specialty metals require respiratory protection during welding and burning operations regardless of location. These shields are available at our shop or local vendors and proper planning is important to have these items on hand when needed. Check with your Superintendent or Safety Coordinator for guidance.

As you can see, there is no one piece of PPE that works across the board and fits all conditions. It is vital to everyone's well being that we as Supervisors and craftsmen and women, be aware of changing conditions and quickly adapt before an injury occurs. Good work practices benefit everyone. Take the initiative to get the right PPE before hand. Stop if the conditions warrant upgraded PPE until you have the right selection, and assist your fellow workers. We must identify potential hazards and take the appropriate safeguards to protect ourselves and those around you.

**Take a minute, think about the hazards, make proper changes when needed and go home the same way you came to work.**

**Safe!**